

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS HARARE 000068

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/PDPA DALTON, MITCHELL, SIMS AND AF/S RAYNOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [KPAO](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REPORT: EDITOR ARRESTED UNDER AIPPA; HARARE

11. Norma Edwards (66), the editor of the independent provincial weekly "The Mirror" was arrested and charged under the controversial Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) on January 3 for "publishing a false story." Edwards was charged for running a story that appeared in the December 19 edition on the arrests of National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) activists and opposition Movement for democratic Change (MDC) activists in the town of Masvingo, 293 kilometers south of the capital Harare. In the story, the paper chronicled the events surrounding the arrest of the four activists and their alleged ill-treatment by the police while being held two nights for purportedly masterminding a work stoppage in the town. Edwards was released January 6 and remanded out of custody to February 19, 2003. The police have also questioned Kennedy Murwira, the journalist who wrote the story, and recorded a warned and cautioned statement.
12. Since AIPPA became law on March 15, 2002, twelve journalists working for the private media, including four editors have been arrested and charged for violating Section 80 of the Act. The Section falls under what is termed "Abuse of Journalistic Privilege." According to AIPPA, journalists are said to have "abused their privilege" by writing falsehoods and/or fabricating information. The offense carries a fine of up to Z\$100,000 or imprisonment for a period not exceeding two years. So far, no journalist has been imprisoned or fined for violating AIPPA.

SULLIVAN